

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-20 are all the claims pending in the application. Claim 16 has been withdrawn,

and claims 1-15 and 17-20 have been examined on the merits.

**Allowable Subject Matter**

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 6, 10, 17 and 18 include allowable subject matter and would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Applicants have rewritten these claims in independent form so that they are now allowable.

**Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §112**

Claim 19 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. Applicants have amended claim 19 in a manner believed to overcome the rejection.

**Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102**

Claims 1-5, 7-9, 11-12, 15 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Soga et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,490,790). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 1 recites a second punch which is kept off the plate member until the molding of a first member is finished. Claim 7 recites that the second punch is kept off the plate member until the first forging work is finished. Claims 1 and 7 are allowable over Soga at least because Soga fails to teach or suggest a second punch which is kept off a plate member until molding of a first member is finished or until a first forging work is finished. With reference to a non-limiting embodiment of the specification, in such a configuration, the second forging work can be performed without receiving an external force from flowing related to molding a first member or performing a first forging work (*see* page 4, lines 8-18).

The Examiner asserts that Soga dies 1 and 2 constitutes the claimed first punch and that Soga punches 6<sub>1</sub>, 6<sub>2</sub>, 7<sub>1</sub>, 7<sub>2</sub> constitute the claimed second punch. In Soga, a portion of the surface of die 1 is flush with the surfaces of punches 6<sub>1</sub> and 7<sub>1</sub>. Similarly, a portion of the face of die 2 is flush with the surfaces of punches 6<sub>2</sub> and 7<sub>2</sub> (*see* Fig. 2A). Because of this, the punches 6<sub>1</sub>, 6<sub>2</sub>, 7<sub>1</sub>, 7<sub>2</sub> are brought into contact with the perform W' at the same time as the dies 1, 2 begin to process the perform (*see* Fig. 2B). Accordingly, the alleged Soga second punch clearly is not kept off the perform until molding of a first member is finished or until a first forging work is finished and any process done by the alleged second punch will be subject to flows and stresses from a first molding or forging.

In view of the above, claims 1 and 7 are allowable over Soga at least because Soga fails to teach a second punch which is kept off the plate member as claimed.

Claims 2-5 and 19 depend from claim 1, and claims 8-9, 11-12 and 15 depend from claim 7. Therefore, claims 2-5, 8-9, 11-12, 15 and 19 are allowable at least because of their respective dependencies.

**Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)**

Claims 13-14 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Soga. The Examiner asserts that Soga teaches every element of these claims except for the sizing or particular material, and that the sizing and material would have been obvious. Claims 13-14 and 20 depend from claim 7.

As discussed above, Soga is deficient with respect to claim 7 with regards to the operation of the second punch. Even if Soga were modified as suggested by the Examiner, the above-noted deficiencies of Soga would not be corrected. Accordingly, since even a modified

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U.S. APPLN. NO. 10/647,115

ATTY. DOCKET NO. Q77135  
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Soga would not disclose each and every element of claim 7, it certainly would not disclose each and every element of claims 13-14 and 20, which depend from claim 7. Therefore, Applicants submit that claims 13-14 and 20 are also allowable over Soga.

**Conclusion**

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

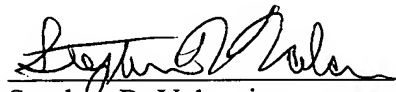
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